

# THE LEISURE HOUR

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WOLF ASSAILED BY THE ENTREATIES OF HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.

## THE WEAVER OF NAUMBURG;

OR, THE TRIUMPHS OF MEEKNESS.

CHAPTER III.

It was as Wolf had feared. When Frau Ursula learnt what her husband had agreed to undertake, No. 238, 1856.

she uttered a loud lamentation, accusing him of want of love for her and his children; of needlessly risking their lives and his own, for the sake of those who had no claim upon him.

"What are the plague-stricken to you?" she said, passionately; "your place is at your loom,

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and in the midst of your family, not in the chamber of death. Look at your children; see how healthy, how rosy, how well-grown they are; and would you, after all the years of care, toil, privation, and anxiety which they have cost us, expose them to the danger of being carried off in a few days? Tell me, how much are they to give you for the lives of your children? How large is the bribe for which you are to yield up yourself and us to the black death? In all our poverty, were we not happy — happier than the burgher-master, our governor? Children! Erwin, Beatrice, all of you, up! beseech your father not to sell your lives; not to make orphans of you; entreat him to keep the black death far from us."

Wolf was in a moment surrounded by his children, who seized his hands, stroked his cheeks, embraced his knees, and assailed him with caresses and earnest petitions; his wife, meanwhile, weeping so bitterly that it might have melted a heart of stone to see her. But meek and mild and gentle as Wolf was, his resolution remained unshaken.

"Wife! Ursula!" said he, striving to free himself from the children, "when you see one whom you love, sinking under a heavy weight, will you add a fresh load to it, or will you help him to bear it? A heavy burden is laid upon me, which, on your account, almost crushes me; but the command of my Saviour, the will of my burgher-master, and my duty as a citizen, have imposed it upon me, and I may not shake it off again. Christ our Lord has said, we must even lay down our lives for the brethren; and whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for his sake, shall find life eternal. If it be God's will, the black death will find us out without our going near the infected houses; but if it please him to prolong our lives, he can preserve us as wonderfully as he did the three holy men in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace."

As Wolf was not to be moved from his purpose, his family ceased by degrees their entreaties and lamentations. With a cheerful heart and firm trust in God, Wolf entered upon his dangerous office. He became the adviser, preserver, and comforter of the sick and their relatives; by his activity and vigilance he saved many lives; by his consolations he preserved many from despair; by his attention and care he rescued yet more in the infected houses from the pangs of hunger. The consciousness of doing so much good, filled him with indescribable satisfaction, and set him above all fear of danger, which perhaps was the cause that he escaped the infection. Wolf's example had also great influence with his family; and, as they became accustomed to the danger, their anxious fears gradually subsided. It is, of course, to be understood, that whilst Wolf was occupied with the management of his important trust, which put a complete stop to his linen-weaving, he and his family were liberally supplied with all that they required from the town revenues.

In the course of two months the pestilence, which had carried off so many victims, and placed so many families in mourning, disappeared from the town of Naumburg. Men are more commonly moved to repentance and thankfulness by

the chastisements than by the bounties of God. The inhabitants of Naumburg, accordingly, celebrated their deliverance from the plague by appointing a day of general thanksgiving. One of the most deeply affected by the day was Wolf the linen-weaver: and with good reason; for had not the Lord done great things for him and his? Not one of his beloved ones was taken from him, and he looked with a grateful heart upon his wife and his eight children, who were on their knees beside him, uniting with him in prayer and praise. Had not the black death passed over his house, even as the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites, in the night when all the first-born of the Egyptians were slain?

Others, however, celebrated the day in a different way. Out of the black straw by which the infected houses had been distinguished, a figure was made to represent the black death, and fastened to the top of a pole. The bearers of it were preceded by Stein with his drum, whilst the noisy rabble formed the advanced and rear-guard. As they proceeded, the multitude rapidly increased, and the black death was carried out of the town in triumph, and given up to the flames outside the gates, with loud shouts of joy. This *auto-da-fé* took place in nearly all the towns and villages which had been visited by the plague, and was for a long period yearly repeated on a certain day, until at length the meaning of this whimsical ceremony was forgotten, and the observance of it was prohibited by the authorities, on account of the riot and disorder which frequently accompanied it.

After formally resigning his well-executed trust, Wolf returned, with feelings of inward delight and satisfaction, to his loom.

"Dear valued friend," said he to it, "who hast been so many years the constant support of my family, how glad I am to sit down before thee, and once more throw the shuttle! I think thou must have missed me a little." And, so saying, Wolf set to work with the zest and eagerness of a hungry man at his meal.

He was, however, soon interrupted by the entrance of a messenger with a summons to the council-house. He started and exclaimed: "What am I wanted for now? Surely the black death is not come back again! Heaven forbid!" And he followed the messenger in great disquietude.

When, after a considerable time, he returned to his house, his stooping gait and slow steps foreboded nothing good to his anxiously expectant wife.

"Andreas, Andreas!" she cried, as he entered the room, "what can be the matter? You look more cast down than you did when you had undertaken the charge of the sick? What did they want with you at the council-house?"

Wolf drew a long breath, looked at his wife with a suppressed smile, and said, "I am made a common-councilman."

"A common-councilman!" exclaimed his wife, in astonishment; "and you speak as dolefully as if it was a great misfortune!"

"I am quite ashamed of myself," answered Wolf. "It is not suitable for a simple weaver to be a member of the town-council."

"But," replied Ursula, "how can they make

you a common-councilman, when you have no property in the town? Such an exception has never been made."

"But I have property now," said Wolf, quietly, "and am become a householder."

Ursula laughed. "A snail's house, then, it must be; for not even a dog-kennel or a hen-house could we buy for ourselves."

"I have not bought the house; it has been given to me," said Wolf, colouring.

"You are joking," said his wife. "Do be serious, and speak plainly. How came you to get a house, and what sort of one is it?"

"It is the house of the late locksmith's widow, in Seiler-street, who left no heirs, which consequently devolved to the town. You know the house; it is not a large one, with three windows in front, and two stories high; but quite large enough for us."

"Is it possible!" cried Ursula, in joyful astonishment. "Are you not imposing upon me?"

"No, indeed," said Wolf. "Our town-council has made us a present of the house, as a reward for what I have done as overseer of the sick. It is so expressed in the deed of gift. And that is what makes me so ashamed. For have I not already been paid more than I could have earned by weaving? Was not the pleasure of being permitted to save so many human lives, and receiving the grateful thanks of those placed under my care, a far richer reward than I looked for? Will not people now say of me, that I only undertook the office for the sordid love of lucre?"

Wolf preached to inattentive ears. No one listened to his last words. "Have you heard, children?" said Ursula, exultingly, "we have a house of our own! A large handsome house, with kitchen and parlour, and windows, doors, and stairs, has been presented to your father by the town-council. We need not live in lodgings any more. And he is made a common-councilman, too. That is the next step to an alderman, and a lucrative post. There is good news for you."

"A house! a house!" exclaimed eight pair of rosy lips in chorus. The children seized each other's hands and danced round the little room, raising a cloud of dust, and nearly upsetting their father's bench.

After the merry noisy dance had lasted for a while, Siegbert let go his sister Adelgrenda's hand, and, panting for breath, asked his father—"Has our house a garden?"

"Yes, it has," answered Wolf; "rather a narrow one, but long, very long."

New rejoicings followed this intelligence.

"Can we keep fowls and geese and ducks?" inquired Beatrice.

"Nobody can hinder us," replied Wolf.

"I suppose there is not a pigeon-cote to our house," said the pigeon-loving Erwin, doubtfully.

"I rather think I saw a dove-cote in the centre of the yard," returned Wolf; "but I really do not exactly know, for it is a long time since I called to see the late locksmith's widow."

"When are we to enter our house?" asked Ulrica.

"Could not we soon go to see it?" said Erwin.

"Whenever we please," returned Wolf. "Here is the key of the house-door;" and he drew a large and somewhat rusty key out of his pocket.

"Father!" they all cried at once, "let us go directly to see our house. Dear father, pray be persuaded! Come now, this very minute!"

Urged by the delighted children and their happy mother, Wolf left his loom to accompany them to the new house. The children ran on before, and when he reached the house, he found them all planted in a row, in front of it, busily counting the number of windows, and admiring its outward appearance. They crowded round him as he unlocked the door, and with loud exclamations of delight poured into the house, and dispersed themselves in the different rooms, giving them all a close inspection.

A fresh and joyful surprise awaited them when they entered the yard. They here found themselves greeted by a noble chanticler, at the head of a number of hens of various colours. Two white and two grey geese stood gravely upon one leg, and twinkled their eyes at their new masters. Five ducks, with bright green and blue wing feathers, waddled quacking up to them, and aimed with their broad bills at the children's toes; at which little Bertha was a good deal frightened and began to cry.

"Guckeragoo! guckeragoo!" now sounded from above their heads; and as the children turned quickly towards the dove-cote, Mr. Pigeon raised his feathers, stretched out his neck, and made a low bow by way of welcome to his new friends. Meanwhile Winfred had hunted the yard through for a pig-sty, and happily found one in a corner. Standing on his toes to peep over the door, he espied the long snouts of two young pigs, which immediately set up an inharmonious grunting, answered by the happy children with a shout of delight.

"All this has been given us by our noble, generous burgher-master," said Wolf, deeply moved, and with tears in his eyes. The children, followed by their parents, now hastened into the garden, measured its length and breadth, counted the fruit-trees, currant and gooseberry-bushes, and calculated its capabilities.

Wolf took no share in these proceedings. He stood under a pear-tree, whose fine ripe fruit hung upon the boughs in rich profusion. He had uncovered his head, and raised his tearful eyes in pious thankfulness. "O Lord," he prayed with folded hands, "I am all unworthy of the favours which thou hast bestowed upon thy servant. Preserve thou me and mine from pride and arrogance. Let my children grow up in thy faith and fear. Amen."

"My good Andreas," said Ursula, joining her husband, "how ashamed I am now, that I so urgently dissuaded you from undertaking the care of the sick. If you had listened to the entreaties of your foolish wife, we might have remained as poor as church mice all our lives."

"But if, instead of being liberally rewarded," answered Wolf, earnestly, "we had caught the infection, and some of us had died, you would not then have praised me, but perhaps would have heaped the bitterest reproaches upon me. Oh, Ursula, Ursula! we must not judge of our actions

by the good or harm that may ensue, but solely by what they are in the sight of God. Ursula, my dear wife, promise me that you will remain as you have hitherto been, humble and contented. Do not have pointed shoes with glittering buckles made for you; nor wear caps trimmed with gold spangles; nor dress up the children in finer clothes than they have hitherto worn. Then shall we continue in the good repute that we have enjoyed up to this time, and those who envy us will have no just ground for fault-finding. Now, please, call the children here."

When Wolf saw them all around him, he said in an agitated voice: "Well, my children, how do you like our new property? Does it please you? Are you satisfied with it?"

"Oh, beautiful, splendid, magnificent!" responded on all sides.

"By linen-weaving I could not have gained this house in twenty or thirty years," continued Wolf, "even if I had worked doubly hard at my loom. But two months' care of the sick has done what thirty years of incessant toil could not have accomplished. Consequently, we have not earned our new possessions. They are a generous present from our beloved native town, to which we are therefore bound to be grateful all our lives. Promise me, then, my dear children, that you will, all of you, faithfully and honestly serve our town and its inhabitants; yea, even venture your lives for them, if necessary, and that without expecting any other reward than the approval of your conscience."

"Yes, yes, yes," responded the children, giving their father their hands in confirmation of their promise. The next day the weaver's family entered their modest little house. Wolf commissioned a painter who was passing through the town, and who bought a piece of linen from him, to paint a picture of a snail with his shell on his back, and had it fixed over his house-door. Above it was written in large letters, "Klein, aber mein"—"Little, but my own."

### THE QUEEN'S DRIVE.

MOST of the great cities of Europe have parks or drives for the recreation of their inhabitants; but though many of these are large and splendid, none of them, so far as we know, are picturesque or romantic, excepting the Queen's Drive of Edinburgh. Thus the parks of London, the Phoenix Park of Dublin, the Champs and Allées of Paris, and the park of Brussels, though spacious and verdant, are flat and monotonous; affording, no doubt, a pleasant retreat from dusty streets and smoked buildings, but possessing no variety of scenery, and showing nothing around besides these streets and buildings themselves.

On the south-east of Edinburgh are two hills, called Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat; the former being nearest to the town, and verging close on its suburbs, while behind it the other rises to the height of nearly 800 feet, its summit overtopping the Crags so as to be seen beyond them from various parts of the city. Some years ago the fortunate notion was started, and soon afterwards effected, of making a broad carriage-

road round both of these hills—a circumference of about three miles—leading it in its course by a gentle ascent, of which the ground admits, up the southern side of Arthur's Seat, to the altitude of above 300 feet from the base. At this height it sweeps round that southern side, and is then carried northerly through a natural opening of the hill, emerging again at the north-east side and sloping down to the low ground, along which it runs by the north of the hill, and curves again to the west under Salisbury Crags, till the point is reached from which the ascent begins, and the circuit is completed. We shall now venture on a more particular description.

Entering the royal domain called the Queen's Park, within which the whole drive lies, at a stile near St. Leonard's-street, close by the spot where Sir Walter Scott, in his "Heart of Mid Lothian," has placed the cottage of "Douce Davie Deans," the drive road is seen at a considerable depth below, about the middle of the park which intervenes between the eminence at which we have entered and the base of Salisbury Crags. These Crags rise immediately opposite to the height of about 400 feet, the greater part of which ascent is a steep slope of loose stones and grass, which, however, admits of being climbed, though with difficulty; and above it is a bold and inaccessible front of shaggy naked rock, of more than fifty feet high, the whole sweeping round from the east towards the south, for nearly a mile, in the shape of a convex semicircle. From the top of the rock the ground goes down on the other side by a much easier grassy descent towards the base of Arthur's Seat, but that side is, of course, not seen from the spot at which we have entered.

Having got to the drive and turned southward, the first object which presents itself is Arthur's Seat, the steep western side and summit of which are straight before us, in the form of—a lion *couchant*. We next begin to ascend the gentle slope already mentioned, and looking back from it towards the west, we see the long "ridgy back" (as it has been well named) of the old town, crowned by the lofty castle, while nearer to us is the more modern southern part of the city, terminated at its extremity, just under our view, by the white stone villas, with their gardens, which form the sweet rural suburb of Newington. Beyond this, to the south, are seen the hills of Blackford and Braid, and some miles away the high range of the Pentlands, with a rich country to the west along their northern base. Among other objects in this point of view, we may notice the mansion of Grange, and close to it a modern cemetery of the same name; the first being the house in which Dr. Robertson wrote the greater part of his eminent histories, and the other containing the mortal remains of Dr. Chalmers.

Continuing to ascend the slope, Arthur's Seat rises, like a perpendicular wall, close to the drive road, on our left hand, while to the right the view is intercepted for about a hundred yards by a rock; on passing which, however, and arriving at a spot where the road is carried along the top of a range of high basaltic pillars (called, not inappropriately, Samson's Ribs), we see below and in front of us a scene totally different from that



which we have just left. No part of the town is now visible; and, excepting the mountains of Lammermoor, which loom distantly in the south-east, the hill picture has entirely passed away, there being presented to us instead of it a rich and verdant champaign, rising gently for some miles towards the south, studded with corn-fields, parks, villages, and country seats.

On the western extremity of this view, about three miles off, is the village and church of Liberton; while, as we proceed eastward, we remark close below us the beautiful hamlet of Duddingston, with its church and its adjacent lake, on which, when frozen over in winter, a multitude from the neighbouring city, including often learned judges, professors, and divines, may be seen sweeping "on sounding skates a thousand different ways," or engaged on the ice in the game of curling. Beyond this, the line of the North British Railway may be traced, traversing the plain in different branches, the rattle of its trains, with their smoky pennons, being distinctly heard by us on the drive, though, if the expression may be allowed, it comes in a mellow tone, "by distance made more sweet." Farther on, we see an indentation of the Frith of Forth, called the Bay of Musselburgh, with the little towns which deck its shores, beyond which stretch the rich agricultural plains of East Lothian.

The drive road now turns suddenly northwards, and we find ourselves in a cleft of the hill, which rises on both sides of us for nearly a mile, in the course of which we pass along the side of a small lake, called Dunsappie. So inaccessible and little visited was this spot before the formation of the beautiful drive, that even the existence of this lake was almost unknown; but it is now a favourite resort of the rising generation, and the visitor as he passes sees their neatly rigged little mimic ships gliding on its surface.

We proceed a few hundred yards, and another scene opens to our view—a description of which is well comprised in the words of the poet—

"Yonder the shores of Fife he saw,  
There Preston Bay and Berwick Law,  
And broad between them rolled  
The gallant Frith, the eye might note,  
Whose islands on its bosom float  
Like emeralds chased in gold.\*"

In truth, on reaching the north-east corner of the drive road, the scene before us is unmatched for variety and splendour. The Frith of Forth stretches for an extent of about thirty miles. On its northern shore is the coast of Fife, with the lofty Lomonds in the distance, the isles of Inchkeith and Inchcolm, the broad opening of the estuary towards the ocean; and on the East Lothian shore, the conical hill of North Berwick Law, and the summit of the Bass Rock, seen over an interjecting point of land. Nearer at hand, between us and the sea, and on its southern shore, is the town of Portobello (which, though hardly in existence at the beginning of this century, is now a parliamentary burgh), and the rich seaport town of Leith, with its harbour and shipping, occupying the same position, as the port of the modern Athens, as the Piræus did in ancient

Athens. We see also from the same point the broad mall called Leith Walk, which runs between the city and the port; and an inexhaustible variety of objects in suburb, villa, garden, and grove, spreads for miles before us.

We now turn westward, and descend to the low ground, when, in front of us, is seen the whole extent of the old town of Edinburgh, sloping for above a mile from the Castle, on the west, to the Palace of Holyrood, on its eastern extremity. It must have been nigh to this spot that Pennant first got sight of the city, when he said he had never seen one so magnificent in its approach; but, had he written in the present day, this impression of his would have been still greater; for the Calton Hill (which lies adjacent on the north-west, beyond the Palace), was then merely a verdant eminence, but is now covered with streets, terraces, monuments, and public buildings.

Proceeding onwards, we pass near to the Palace, and on the southern side of the ancient burgh of Canongate. The Palace itself, as a mere building, is probably superior to any other of the royal residences in Britain; but it does not appear to much advantage, being situated on very low ground, and close on the town.

A little farther on, we get again under Salisbury Crags, and complete our circuit by attaining the point at which we set out. We may notice, however, that the valley between the two hills, which is hardly seen from any point of the drive road, is well worth a visit for its beauty and seclusion. It has all the solitude and character of a remote Highland glen; and there is no indication that within half a mile of it is a capital city with a population of 200,000 people.

The drive road, in one part of it, forms a portion of the access by which her Majesty proceeds through the royal park from the neighbouring railway station of Meadowbank to her palace. In the course of her progress the whole hill of Arthur's Seat, from its base to its summit, is opened up to view, but in quite a different aspect from that in which we have described it as presented in the early part of the round we have taken; and the scene which is annually exhibited as the queen is passing, contrasts very strikingly with what is seen on such an occasion in other large cities. There the spectators are crowded on the street, or are looking from windows; here, though a large proportion of them are on the low ground near the road, a still greater number are on the sides of the hill. There is no crowding or disorder, and the sovereign is received with shouts from the eminences above, among which is conspicuous a small, bold hill, crowned by the ruins of a chapel dedicated to St. Anthony. We have been told that the royal pair are very much struck and delighted with this picturesque and unusual prospect, and they have more than once also, in the course of their short visits, enjoyed the gratification of a full round of the drive.

We know how difficult it is to convey, by mere description, a suitable conception of natural scenery, and are sensible, besides, how little justice our feeble attempt can do, in this respect, to the Queen's Drive; but we feel certain that such of our readers as have visited it will join us in saying that they have never seen or heard of any

\* Marmion, Canto 4.

other city in Europe which can present its equal. It is in strict keeping, indeed, with the whole character of the place, so unrivalled for its romantic situation and general beauty.

### HINTS FOR LETTER-WRITERS.

AN eccentric old bachelor friend of ours used to say, that he never read letters which were spun out beyond a certain length, and that if any person sent him one which overstepped the prescribed limits, he made a point of stopping at the proper place, leaving the rest unread. This was certainly a summary mode of proceeding, and the account made his hearers laugh heartily; one of them intimating that he presumed the speaker had not many ladies among the number of his correspondents.

"I have not," said he in return; "but if I had, I should dispose of them much more quickly."

"How so?" inquired a lady; "would you burn their letters without reading?"

"Not so, madam," was the answer. "In most cases I would read the postscript only. I should thus, without trouble, arrive at the only important part of the letter. The majority of ladies do not remember what they are really writing about till they have concluded; then, just recollecting themselves, or perhaps asking the question in their own minds why they write at all, it is recalled to their memory, and there you have it. Besides, the letters of ladies are always of such an unreasonable length; not contented with the limits of the paper they have chosen to spoil, they cross and re-cross it, till it becomes one undistinguishable mass of illegible writing, only to be deciphered by one of themselves. I tell you, ladies and gentlemen," continued he, "I would have an act of parliament to restrict letters within a certain length, allowing ladies, however, to write twice as much as gentlemen; but after that piece of paper is filled, or the number of lines allotted to each is written, I would tax every additional word."

"What a barbarian!" exclaimed some of his lady hearers again; "why, you would neutralise the benefit of the penny postage act, and put an end to friendly correspondence."

"By no means, ladies, by no means," said he, again; "you misunderstand me. I would only teach people when they write, to say what they think, and cut off all the unmeaning compliments and excuses with which too many letters are crammed from end to end; substituting really useful topics, and teaching them to speak on subjects which are alike pleasing both to the writer and the recipient of the epistle. I would limit the length of letters, in order to teach men and women to think before they write, as I would have them also think before they speak: we should not then be bored with those which compel us to wade through four dismal pages, vainly endeavouring to discover why they were written at all, only to find out all that was of the slightest consequence thrust into a scrap of paper at the last."

"But," said another gentleman, "in order to write short letters, to suit your taste, we should

want a new language, for our present style of speaking and writing would not satisfy you."

"Not at all necessary," replied the old gentleman; "but if you wish to acquire a method of letter writing, which will be both brief and elegant, besides useful and economical with regard to time, ink, and paper, I will give you instructions how to attain it."

Having expressed our willingness to be taught, he spoke as follows:—

"When you wish to write a letter, think over what you have to say; finish one subject before you begin another, and in such a manner that you will not have to recur to it again; then, try to express your whole meaning in as few words as possible. If you wish to speak on two subjects which have any reference or resemblance to each other, link them, by placing one immediately after the other, so that in like manner they may be joined in the mind of the reader; and, lastly, be sure to write legibly."

"Now, supposing you have been guilty of spinning out your letters, I would give you this piece of advice—take the letter when written, and if there be a sentence you can express in fewer words, do so; if a long word for which a shorter may be substituted, get rid of it. You thus have the very essence of your subject, and your friends will thank you heartily for your brevity. Then write your letter a second time, as corrected by you; above all, taking care never to make excuses for bad writing by pleading haste, because the time you take to do that might be spent in writing it better. Follow this plan a few times, and you will not regret the additional trouble caused by writing your letter twice, for it will, in the first place, soon cease to be necessary to do so, and in the second, the improvement in your style of correspondence will amply repay you for the trifling cost at which you have acquired it."

The good sense of our worthy old friend's remarks was acknowledged by all his hearers, the ladies included. One of the gentlemen merrily proposed a vote of thanks, which was carried unanimously (as the newspapers say), and the old gentleman took his hat and bade us good night. I leave my readers to gather what benefit they may from his strictures.

### THE FRENCH CONSCRIPT.

THE French army is not reinforced, as ours is, by means of the recruiting sergeant. Among all the military spectacles which one sees constantly in every part of France, we never meet with the perambulating fife and drum, parading the back-ways of towns with a ragged rabble of followers, or charging into the village fairs and markets, in the unguarded hour of excitement, to seduce the unwary by the real or fancied pleasures of a soldier's life. When the French government is in want of recruits, it has but to issue its orders, and in a few months or weeks—or in a few days, if the demand be urgent—the number required will be gathering from all parts of the country, and from nearly all grades of society, towards the dépôts prepared for

their reception. Thence, after undergoing the necessary drilling—which, in a Frenchman's case, in time of active warfare, is marvellously brief—they are drafted to military fortresses, which are the stations of reserve, and are ready to supply the gaps in the regular army as occasion may require.

This ready and effectual mode of maintaining standing armies, and of creating new ones on the spur of a great occasion, is the main cause of the completeness and perfection of the military system of our allies. It is the law of the conscription which is the basis of the system; and it is doubtless because this law is founded on the strictest justice, that, hateful and severe as it is sometimes found, it is for the most part obeyed rigidly and with alacrity. The conscription law declares every man in France, between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, to be so much military material, from which the soldiers of the nation are to be drawn by lot. Social grade has nothing to do with the business, the rich being just as liable as the poor; and thus the burden of the country's wars, whether of defence or aggression, is equally borne by all ranks, the exemptions being so few as not to be worth notice here.

It was not always so, however. Under the old system, the armies were recruited by volunteers, and these chiefly came from the peasant class, because that class was then the most debased and miserable, and the change from the life of a peasant to that of a soldier was a change from toil and starvation to comparative idleness and abundance. But at the Revolution of '89, the old armies, as suspected of adherence to the royal party, were broken up and disbanded, and such of their officers as fell under the same suspicion either perished by the guillotine or retired into exile. To supply new levies, the people rose almost *en masse*, and half the nation was ready to rush to the frontier. Volunteers poured in by hundreds of thousands; but these volunteers were under no obligation to remain in the ranks longer than they chose, and it constantly happened that after a battle, even though victorious, they withdrew in multitudes, satisfied with one campaign, and returned to their homes. Then was established a system of requisition, by which each district was bound to furnish a specified contingent towards the army. This plan proved uncertain in its operation and inefficient in result. At length, in 1798, General Jourdan presented to the Council of Five Hundred a project for a novel mode of recruiting by conscription. It is questionable whether this project would have been sanctioned in the outset by any government not essentially democratic; but it was approved by the Council, and immediately passed into a law.

The conscription works in the following way. Yearly lists are made out, in each department, of those liable to be drawn; the lists are divided into five classes, distinguished only by the several ages from twenty to twenty-five. The government takes from each department its fair per centage of men, according to its population, and it takes them by lot; but it commences with the junior class, having recourse to the next in seniority only when that is exhausted, and so on. The drawing of the lots in a district is a public ceremony, at which numbers of those most interested and their rela-

tives are sure to be present. The scene is often one of intense excitement—of distress and anguish on one part, and frantic mirth and rejoicing on the other; here an old couple bewailing the loss of a son who is the support of their age; there a family group, beside themselves with joy at the escape of the brother and eldest born. But even for those drawn there is yet a chance of escape, as the drawing is always in excess of the required contingent, in order to insure the full complement. Then there is another chance on the day of examination, when it is possible the recruit may be rejected by the army surgeon, on the ground of some personal defect or latent disorder. At all these chances the conscript and his friends will catch, like drowning men at straws, with the utmost eagerness, and the poor fellow himself will be seen with the big drops trickling down his woful face, so long as the smallest doubt remains in his favour. No sooner, however, is the die irrevocably cast, and he is pronounced *un soldat*, than he pulls his cloth cap over his brow, puts a bluff face on the business, and takes incontinently to whistling martial airs, smoking cigars, and practising the marching step. In this way, and in the company of his fellow conscripts, he keeps up his courage as best he can. Perhaps some discharged old veteran of his village takes him under his wing, and spins him long yarns about the first Napoleon, the Austrian or Italian campaigns, the fields of Marengo or Austerlitz, and the twenty years of victory with one defeat—and gives him an old soldier's advice and maxims for his guidance in barrack or camp. But soon comes the fatal order for him to present himself at the dépôt, and then father and mother have to be left, and poor little Annette, who will almost cry her eyes out. And now that all the adieus are over, the poor fellow has to trudge it forty, fifty, sixty, a hundred miles alone, through forest and over waste, to show at the rendezvous in time; and then we have him, as our artist has depicted him, plodding his weary way in wooden shoes, with no one to cheer him on his route, and the sad remembrances of a vanished home and a lost love agonising at his heart and running over at his eyes.

Napoleon was right when he described the conscription as "the dread and desolation of families." He might have added that it was himself who made it so. Towards the close of his career the very name of it was a terror in French ears. Perhaps there never was a word of such horrible significance to those who had cause to dread it. A glance at the way in which a law that, if righteously administered, might have been the safeguard of the state, was recklessly abused, will show the reason of this. Bonaparte saw that the conscription placed the whole resources of France in his hands, and he gave it his support in every way. The Directory levied by it 200,000 men in the single year 1799; in 1802 Bonaparte levied 120,000; in April, 1803, he raised 120,000 more; and in October 60,000 more. In January, 1804, the levy was 60,000; in 1805 it was 80,000; in 1806 it was 80,000; in 1808 it was 80,000, and the list of 1810 was anticipated by an order for a levy of 80,000 in 1809. The levies of 1809 were two—40,000 in April, and 36,000 in October. In 1810 there was a levy of 120,000 from the lists for 1811,



THE CONSCRIPT QUITTING HIS NATIVE VILLAGE.

besides 40,000 from the marine departments. In 1811 came a new levy of 120,000, besides enormous levies in the states annexed by conquest to the empire. These inordinate levies and waste of human life naturally excited the horror of the parents and heads of families; and the older the conscription grew, the greater was the hatred entertained for it. Multitudes of young men and mere boys, whose period of service the forced levies anticipated (clearly against the law), refused to join the *dépôt*, and took to hiding-places in woods and caverns. To meet this spirit of desertion the most stringent severities were had recourse to. The parents and relatives of the defaulters were condemned in a heavy penalty; a price was set on the head of a refractory conscript; and in districts where the offence became common, a moveable column was organized for the express

purpose of hunting them out. The soldiers forming it were quartered on the inhabitants without payment, and the conscripts, when taken, were sent in irons to the fortresses, and subjected at once to military service and hard labour.

The hatred of its victims against the conscription had not the effect of abating its vigour. As fast as the cannon of the enemy mowed down the French ranks, they were refilled by recruits, not twenty years old. At length the disasters of the grand army in Russia brought the levies to a tremendous climax. At the end of 1812 a *senatus consultum* granted the emperor a levy of 500,000 men; but 500,000 men of the required age were not to be found in France. To make up the number, 150,000 youths of nineteen were taken from the lists which would become liable in 1813, and 150,000 more of eighteen from the lists due in



1814. To these were added 100,000 of those who had run the gauntlet of the conscription and escaped the drawing in the years 1809, 1810, 1811, and 1812, and 100,000 of the first *ban* of the National Guard. Again, in 1813, a levy was ordered of 300,000 men in April, and 180,000 more in December. It is horrible to reflect that in spite of all these monstrous levies, and in spite, too, of the fact that a French soldier never got his discharge until disabled by wounds or incurable sickness, Napoleon had in 1814 hardly 150,000 troops to oppose to his enemies. In the short space of fifteen years upwards of two millions of the youth of France had been mown down by the scythe of battle, and the sight of a young able-bodied man not in military garb was a rarity in the land.

We have just said that the burden of French wars is borne equally by all ranks. This does not imply that wealth did not afford the means of escape from the conscription. In every nation there are peace-lovers and constitutional non-combatants, who will never fight if they can avoid it; and even during the most belligerent days of the empire, Napoleon found it necessary to tolerate the practice of serving by substitute. But the price of a substitute rose so enormously with the emergency of the occasion, that thousands found themselves forced into the ranks from want of the means of raising the required sum. This is always the case more or less; and it is this admixture of men of a respectable social class which secures a higher order of intelligence in the French ranks than our own can boast of. After the great Russian disaster, substitutes were hardly to be obtained at any price—there were, in fact, none to bid for; and we have seen during the late Crimean struggle, when it looked most serious, premiums offered at the Paris insurance offices approaching a hundred pounds of our money. The system of insuring against the conscription appears not to have been thought of during the wars of the Revolution and the Empire. It is, however, now in full operation, and, inasmuch as the government have not thought fit to discountenance it, may be supposed to work well. Besides the obvious advantage it presents to those young men training for professional pursuits, and to all averse from a military life, who by the payment of a small premium may defy the misfortune of the conscription, the French politician recognises another advantage not so obvious. The great cities of France abound in a spendthrift and reckless class, who are ever dissipating their means in extravagant living. These men, when they have arrived at the climax of an empty purse, are apt to fall into desperate courses and swell the criminal ranks. For them the military service, as substitutes, affords a field of action, which it is found in practice that, to a large extent, they embrace. In barracks they are notoriously insubordinate, and have to be controlled by a fierce discipline; but in the field they are, beyond their comrades, audacious and daring, and are rarely seen to turn their backs to the enemy.

We have only to add, that the severity of the conscription law has been greatly modified during the long period of comparative peace which followed the fall of the first Napoleon. The French soldier now obtains his discharge, if he desire it,

after a moderate term of service, upon renouncing his claim to a pension. All only sons of widows are exempt, and were exempt from the first enactment of the law; but now, if a conscript can prove satisfactorily that his presence at home is necessary to save his family from poverty, the government will admit his claim for exemption, irrespective of any other considerations.

### THE GROUP OF TWELVE THOUSAND ISLANDS.

THE group of "twelve thousand islands" is a definite enumeration in local use, to denote the unknown number of those magnificent insulated lands, which compose the great Oriental or Indian Archipelago, and the vast space of sea they stud. The "gardens of the sun" is another phrase of eastern speech with reference to them, not inappropriate, considering the exquisite and endlessly varied forms of beauty they present, their richness, luxuriance, and universal glitter beneath a transparent atmosphere and ever-glowing skies. In fact, through the greater part of the region, as far as the external features of inorganic nature are concerned, the conceptions entertained relative to the Elysian Fields of classical mythology, and the Happy Islands of Arabic fable, are here realities, and not dreams. Forty degrees of longitude close to the equator, and thirty of latitude, define the extent of this blending of land and water, in combinations not more diversified than lovely or sublime. This is a linear distance of two thousand seven hundred miles from east to west, by two thousand one hundred miles from north to south, the area included within these limits being not less than five millions and a half of square miles. There is every variety of size in the Archipelago, from the atom of rock just peering above the waves, upon which the bird alights to rest its wing or dress its plumage, to the spacious platform which accommodates multitudinous nations, and on which the armies of distinct potentates are marshalled. While months are required to enable a ship to accomplish the circuit of a single coast, a day's sail will often suffice to carry it through an entire cluster of the group. Borneo, after our continent-like Australia, is the largest island in the world. Sumatra extends more than a thousand miles in length, by an average of about a hundred in width. Java has dimensions nearly equal to those of our own England; Celebes, Luzon, and Mindanao, correspond in space to the largest of the West Indian group. Ceram, Floras, and more than a dozen others, are little less inferior. Amboyna, followed by a numerous train, represents the area of Jersey; others dwindling down from thence to the fairy-like patches which the billows in their sportive leaping readily submerge.

Broad and deep oceanic channels divide some of the islands, but generally the intervening passages are narrow, tortuous, and intricate, full of submarine rocks, reefs, and shoals, rendering careful navigation necessary, though far less perilous than common to close seas, owing to the steadiness of the winds, the regularity of the currents, and the prevailing serenity of the surface. A section of the region is indeed swept by the typhoons of the

China sea, but the invasions of the hurricane are not of frequent occurrence, while the interior expanses slumber in lake-like repose, which the oscillations of the tide scarcely disturb. Inconceivably bright and richly blue, the waters placidly gleam beneath the glowing equinoctial sun. Land and sea meet the eye in every direction, mingling in magical confusion. The shores are green, umbrageous, and flowery, down to the edge of the wave; and as one fades from view on the right, another comes within gaze on the left, to continue the charm of the landscape. Cultivated hills are often seen rising gracefully in park-like slopes from the beach; valleys of secluded loveliness open between them, each with its gushing stream; while the sublimity of lofty mountains appears in the back-ground, their peaks in the evening showing the beautiful phenomenon of the rose tint, which blushes on the heights of the Alps and the porphyritic rocks of Egypt. One unvarying forest covers their masses, except at the summits, where lie the wrecks of woods, withered or reduced to cinders by an outburst of the sulphurous vapours and fiery elements in their bosom. Even these throes of nature, which occur at intervals with terrible power, the cause of the greatest danger, are also a source of fertility, the lava currents being speedily decomposed, and converted into mould fit for all the purposes of vegetation. There are other phases of scenery—mangrove swamps, pestilential marshes, and rank jungles—but the vast majority of the surface is placed by elevation beyond the range of miasmatic influence. Breezes blow, rife with perfume, from myriads of aromatic plants and sweet-scented flowers; and though the atmosphere is charged with equinoctial warmth, it is tempered by seasonal winds and exuberant moisture.

There is truth in the statement, that gifts of beauty and utility are not often grouped together in the economy of nature. But both have been sown broadcast, and with prodigal hand, over the face of this great maze of islands. Products the most precious, because of their limited distribution and extensive employment by the civilized nations, the most remarkable in themselves, either from structure or adornment, and the most serviceable in common life, are here combined. The useful buffalo roams the woods, with the most brilliantly coloured of the feathered tribes sporting in the branches; timber trees and delicate blossoms flourish side by side; coal seams and diamond mines are found in close juxtaposition. The mineral wealth is immense, though very imperfectly known as to its extent and quality. Sumatra, the Happy Isle of the Hindus, also styled the Land of Gold, contains the precious metal; iron-ore exists, from which steel is wrought, equal to the most celebrated manufactures of Europe; sulphur, arsenic, salt-petre, alum, and many valuable coloured earths, likewise abound. Banca is renowned for its abundant tin-mines, which supply the markets of India and China. Borneo yields diamonds, various precious stones, and coal, the latter a more important product than the rarest gems. The Philippines possess copper, lead, cinnabar, and other metals; and pearls of fine quality are sprinkled in the shallow waters near the shores.

The animal kingdom is profusely supplied with species and individuals. According to our locality, we may encounter herds of elephants ranging the forests, the two-horned rhinoceros, the tiger, the tapir, the honey-feeding bear, the buffalo, the babirisa, the sloth, and the ouran-outang, which, with the chimpanzee, makes the nearest approach to man, and builds a house for himself in the trees, resembling the nest of the rook in everything but size. Squirrels of numerous varieties are everywhere met with; monkeys of all shapes and colours spring from branch to branch, or in long files rapidly steal up the trunks; and deer gambol in the open glades—amongst them the graceful palandoh, no larger than a hare—feeding on blossoms, haunting the banks of pools, as remarkable for its dark, lustrous, melting eyes, as the gazelle of Persian poetry. In the deeper and denser recesses, green, velvety, and harmless snakes hang pendant from the boughs, while others of darker hues, dangerous and deadly, lie coiled up beneath them, or, disturbed by the human intruder, assume a menacing aspect, but glide out of sight. Huge alligators haunt the mangrove creeks and swamps, rarely troublesome, having abundance of fish upon which to feed. Fragile and richly-tinted shells lie empty or tenanted upon the sandy beaches, while others arrest attention by their enormous magnitude, amounting to three feet in diameter, and several inches in thickness. Shells of the gigantic Philippine oyster are actually used as fonts in the churches of that group. But of all the inhabitants of the waters, the most peculiar is the herbivorous duyong, or daughter of the sea, the fabled mermaid of the east—one of the links between the creatures of the field and flood—whose flesh was formerly set apart for the tables of sultans and rajahs, as too delicious to be used by ordinary mortals, though now greedily devoured by the natives without scruple. Insect life is intensely developed, often under curious shapes, with singular properties, or splendid dyes. The silver-winged butterfly attracts by its beauty; the bronze green beetle by emitting a fragrance resembling that of otto of roses. The tones of the myriads of tiny races sometimes rise to a shrill and deafening clangour. They are the most constant of the sounds heard in the woods, though the notes of birds continually mingle with them, loud or low, rapid or long-drawn, cheerful or plaintive, and ranging over a greater or less musical compass, while at intervals the ear may catch the impressively complaining and importunate cries of the únkas, with the howl of some wandering beast.

The most gorgeously arrayed of winged creatures inhabit these islands. There are birds with plumage of vivid orange, purple, rose-red, gaudy crimson, violet, green, bright blue, and golden colours, which contribute touches of marvellous beauty to the scenery, as they sweep the air, alight upon the ground, or nestle among the foliage. The cream-coloured pigeons are eminently pleasing, keeping up a plaintive coo all day in the solitudes. The pheasants and partridges are resplendent with green and gold. Some of the lories have almost every hue of the rainbow. The cassicans, which resemble jays, have a high metallic lustre. Of two species of pirolls, the one is bright violet, the

other brilliant emerald. But the birds of paradise, called "birds of the sun" by the Spaniards, "king's birds" by the Dutch, and "birds of God" by the inhabitants of Ternate, hold the highest rank among the feathered glories of the creation. They are natives of New Guinea, but migrate to the Moluccas, changing their quarters with the monsoon, always flying against the wind, on account of their peculiar attire. It was formerly supposed that they were footless, performing all the offices of existence, feeding, sleeping, and breeding, in the air, till it was discovered that in preparing the preserved specimens, the feet had simply been removed for the sake of convenience. This notion has been enshrined in poetry. Hence,

"The footless fowl of heaven, that never  
Rest upon earth, but on the wing for ever,  
Hovering o'er flowers their fragrant food inhale,  
Drink the descending dew upon its way,  
And sleep aloft while floating on the gale."

The head is variegated with the brightest tints; the neck is of a beautiful fawn; the body is covered with feathers of a browner hue tinged with gold; and from the tail two long slender filaments extend, ending in a curled flat web of emerald green. In the nutmeg season, the birds leave their breeding grounds in small flocks, for the Moluccas, and are said to be so overpowered with the fragrance of the spice groves, that numbers drop to the ground, and are readily caught by the natives, the feathers forming a valuable article of export.

The flora of the Archipelago is still more extraordinary than the fauna, and is perhaps the most magnificent in the world. Trees of gigantic forms and exuberant foliage compose the forests, each species shooting up its trunk to its utmost limit of development, as if striving to escape from and overlook the crowd. Some are admirably adapted for building purposes, while others furnish ornamental woods, or caoutchouc and gutta percha, vegetable tallow and vegetable wax, soap and resin for varnish, camphor and other gums. But the uses and value of numerous species are at present unknown, not having been commercially or botanically examined. Besides the camphor laurel, which yields the gum from which that substance is prepared, a peculiar and costly kind is found in solid lumps in the stems of a tree. Many of the larger members of the woodlands are flower-bearing and highly odoriferous. The perfume is often oppressive and heavy when close, though highly agreeable at a distance. The cananga, a tree of the largest size, bears a profusion of greenish-yellow flowers, which open only at sunset, and on a calm evening diffuse a pleasant fragrance, which affects the senses at the distance of several hundred yards. Trunks, rising to the height of a hundred feet without casting out a single branch, are clothed with every variety of satellite and creeper, which, clinging together, unite in vast festoons of different colours—crimson, yellow, and purple—forming vegetable arcades high overhead, swaying to and fro under the influence of the wind. Some of the climbing plants wrap themselves in close thick-matted folds round the supporting trunk, and circle it completely, till the timber perishes in the treacherous embrace. A species of baubinia covers the trees in December with luxuriant clusters of gaudy

crimson blossoms; another spreads over them a mantle of purple flowers, relieved by a white, ivory-like centre. Not less copious is the aquatic vegetation. Spacious pools and lakes present the appearance of vast beds of brilliant water-lilies—a contrast of snow-white flowers and dark green leaves—among which are found the nests of aquatic birds, continually seen running over, or swimming amid the plants. The flower of the lake, growing in the standing waters of Java, has a stalk six feet high, with an inflorescence resembling the tulip, though fragrant, and twice as large, with wide-pointed petals of bright green, white, primrose, and rich purple colours.

Flowering and ornamental plants are profusely scattered over the slopes, plains, and rocks, from the crests of lofty hills to the sea-shores, remarkable for their brilliant decorations, peculiarities of form, or singular properties. Red and yellow are the prevailing colours of the floral race, though other hues are common. The loneliest dyak can feast his eye, adorn his person and his cottage with more exquisite bouquets than the wealthiest botanical amateur. Nor are the native islanders, though debased by piracy, degraded by servitude, and addicted to the wildest habits, indifferent to the ornaments cheaply obtained from their splendid vegetation. Both men and women deck themselves with chaplets and strings of some fragrant floral favourite, twined in the hair or bound around the forehead. The graves of the dead are similarly adorned; and, in the Javanese language, "flower" is the only term used to express poetry or a beautiful woman. The flower of the bush has dark green leaves, with clusters of orange-coloured blossoms. The "flowers of mercy," all highly fragrant, are of a delicate white or orange. The four lights of Java, not unlike a single gillflower in appearance, show a superb red, with four curved leaves, dark green on the inside, pale green without, variegated with stripes of different tints. There are parasites, with stems as thick as the human arm, and inflorescences of extraordinary dimensions. One forms an erect spike, six feet high, with upwards of a hundred large spreading brown and white chequered flowers, from two to three inches in diameter. Another, the *Rafflesia Arnoldi*, produces a flower with brick-red petals, half an inch thick, measuring more than a yard across, from the extremity of each petal; and inside there is a nectarium or cup, nine inches wide and as many deep, capable of holding a gallon and a half of water. The pitcher plants—a race of climbers of various species—are highly curious and beautiful. The formations they produce, from which the name is derived, are generally crimson, and precisely resemble pitchers, which would contain upwards of a pint of water, being also furnished with a lid. The monkey-cup is similar—a hollow flower with a lid at the top—which remains open until the cup is filled by the rains or dews. It then closes, and re-opens when a fresh supply is needed. But it is in vain to attempt to specify, within reasonable limits, the multitudes of remarkable objects in the floral vegetation. The tree of morning opens its blossoms at sunrise, and closes them in the evening; the pale lady of the night blows only long after sunset; and the tree of melancholy never blooms but at midnight.

The fruit-bearing and farinaceous plants are an equally extensive class, distinguished by the fineness of the produce, many of the species having the Archipelago for their native and only seat. The list includes the durion, the jaca, forty varieties of mango in Java alone, the banana, yam, sago palm, guava, pine-apple, custard-apple, peculiar kinds of orange, lemon, and citron, with the pride of the east, as the mangusteen is called. This is one of the most delicious fruits that grows; and the tree on which it is produced is one of the most graceful and beautiful anywhere to be met with. The stem is of a variegated brownish red colour; the branches are regularly disposed, giving to the head the form of a parabola; the leaves are of a bright green on the upper side, and a fine olive on the under; the flower resembles that of a single rose, with some dark red petals; the fruit is round, and about the size of an ordinary orange; the flavour is that of the finest grape and strawberry united. This is likewise the region of the spices, which comprehend several kinds of cinnamon and cassia—both of the laurel tribe—the nutmeg and mace tree, and the aromatic myrtle, the buds of which are known as cloves. The cultivation of nutmegs is somewhat widely spread, but nowhere are they produced in such perfection as at the Banda group, chiefly in the island of that name, the possession of which has been fiercely disputed by the Dutch, Spaniards, and Portuguese, on account of the fragrant nut. Cloves are the produce for which Amboyna is renowned—an island to the northward, one of the Moluccas.

While loveliness and luxury are thus prominent features of the botany, there are vegetable products invested with the attributes of danger and death. Some of the nettle tribe, and of the fig genus, which belongs to the same natural order, assume the most pernicious character, having such acrid juices, that the sting of one not only occasions pain, but illness, which lasts for days. The chetik—a shrub growing in the dense forests of Java—is impregnated with a deadly poison; and the upas tree of the island has the same dread property. Both occur in Borneo, though not so commonly. The celebrated upas tree, of which Mr. Foersch, of the Dutch East India Company, propagated an absurdly erroneous account in 1785, to the effect that desolation reigned around it—that neither man, beast, or bird could approach it and live—neither vitiates the air nor injures the vegetation, but flourishes in the woods, though life is speedily destroyed if its juices gain access to the animal system. The poisonous sap flows freely from the bark when tapped, and is equal in potency, when thrown into the circulation, to any animal poison yet known. The tree has a fine appearance, rising from sixty to hundreds feet high, with a stem, the bark of which is of a white colour, supported at its base by those processes resembling buttresses, which are common to the trees of tropical jungles. There is a upas now growing in the United States, which a naval officer transported from Java in 1852, and presented to the National Institute at Washington.

But in many parts of the Archipelago the passage is a short one from the luxuriant and pleasing to the sterile and terrible; and the spectator may be in the midst of odours, encircled with exuberant

verdure and gleaming flowers, with the elements of destruction not far beneath his feet. If Banda has its nutmeg groves, woods of cocoa and other fruit-trees, with a sheltered and superb roadstead, it has the Gunong Api, or the fire mountain, in the haven, which has many a time blasted the industry of the Dutch, and threatened to destroy them totally, as if in retribution for the atrocities committed to sustain a rapacious commercial policy. The volcano forms an islet of itself. It rises with a gentle slope to the height of two thousand feet, and is clothed far up above the base with stately vegetation. But underneath this living mantle of the mountain lie the monuments of its destructive energy—courses of lava, once fiery hot, with dead and blackened trunks. Mr. Logan, of Singapore, the accomplished editor of the "Journal of the Indian Archipelago," witnessed a remarkable contrast on visiting one of the Java volcanoes after an eruption, which is described in that publication.\* First, plantations of tea and rice were passed; then a belt of coffee shrubberies; next, the primeval forest, with its tall trees, gay climbers, carpeting of moss, and enormous ferns. Further on, the traces of freshness and loveliness gradually became more and more scanty; at last every trace was gone, and there alone appeared the dry, calcined, and dark remains of noble woods—thousands of trees lying prostrate, others still standing amid heaps of cinders. Sometimes, when the volcanoes are in gentler mood—only emitting at intervals light clouds of smoke or vapour—the spectacle is indescribably beautiful, seen under certain aspects of daylight, as at sunrise. The cloud emerges in a column, which often turns spirally around the centre; it spreads out laterally at the summit, after having reached its greatest perpendicular height; it then appears as a gigantic tree depicted on the firmament, reflecting the rosy red or golden hues of morn, and finally floats away in similarly tinted flakes and fleeces.

Thus, secure in its riches, beauty, and magnificence as the Archipelago ordinarily appears—scenes of undisturbed repose as seem the "gardens of the sun" to the occasional visitor—there are nigh at hand, hid in the dark womb of superbly verdant mountains, elements of change, the most awfully sublime and potential that have operated in the history of our planet, ready at a moment, which no science can foretell or prevent, to remove the impression of stability by shaking the masses to their foundations. Happily the great convulsions—when the earth disgorges flames of fire and streams of molten matter—when forests are withered with sulphurous vapours, the soil is coated with showers of ashes, and the sun darkened at noon-day over leagues on leagues with clouds of smoke—are the occurrences of distant intervals, and their destructive effects are confined to a limited range, though almost annually some of the slighter evidences of terrestrial instability are experienced. Were it otherwise—or supposing that animated and inanimate nature in this region had not the drawbacks mentioned—

\* We are indebted to this publication for some of our remarks; also to "The Indian Archipelago, its History and Present State," by Horace St. John and Sons; a work of great research and artistic skill. Longman and Co.



the arrangement would be no mercy to mankind, neither would it harmonise with the general plan of Providence. In the high dispensations of heaven evil mingles with good in the external lot of man, wherever his local habitation may be, designed to evoke salutary thoughtfulness upon the fact that we are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," than which nothing is more certain, and few things more forgotten. This is human experience—east, west, north, and south—though the means are various by which the lessons monitory of final disturbance and disruption are administered. It matters comparatively little how they are given, so that the truth is apprehended and improved, though, for our part, we prefer the incidents of life amid the sobrieties of nature in our northern home, to an abode in the "gorgeous east," with its brilliant sky, splendid landscapes, rich perfumes, and variegated flowers, having to take along with them beasts of prey, deaun-dealing reptiles, poison plants, and subterranean fires.

#### VISIT TO MONKS OF LA TRAPPE AT BELLEFONTAINE.

THE ancient abbey of Bellefontaine is situated in a wild but picturesque locality. Its approaches are of a mountainous character, and the convent is surrounded by sombre and dismal forests, whose gloom contributes to increase the feelings of sadness and of melancholy which involuntarily oppress the mind at the aspect of a spot where death is hailed as the greatest of earthly blessings.

We reached the monastery at one o'clock in the afternoon—an hour at which the monks usually indulge in a short slumber. No one was visible; the door was opened, and we entered the courtyard; not a living thing was to be seen in the long, low, white-washed passages; the echo of our footsteps was the only sound that broke the silence which reigned around. At last we arrived at a door, which our leader opened without further ceremony: an old man appeared, but he had scarcely cast his eyes upon our company when he started back, and, covering his face with one hand, made violent signs to us with the other to withdraw.

We gazed at one another in the utmost astonishment at this extraordinary reception, when it suddenly occurred to us that the repugnance exhibited by the monk was owing to the presence of a young lady, who, ignorant of St. Bernard's rules, had accompanied us upon our visit. Our suspicion was presently corroborated by the remarks of the brother, whose office it was to receive strangers, and our friend was compelled unwillingly to withdraw.

The monk who acts as master of the ceremonies, is the sole link that connects a monastery of La Trappe with the exterior world. The administration of the hospitality of the convent is his peculiar care; and as he is responsible for the good or evil opinion which visitors conceive of the institution, he is chosen from among those of the inmates who have formerly moved in good society. The countenance of this monk, who wore the apparel of the order—while the gate-keeper, the individual whom we had first encountered, differed little in

dress from the surrounding peasantry—was fine and expressive; he held his shaven head erect; and his address, though grave and earnest, was pleasing and polite. He first explained to us the different divisions of the order. "We are divided into three classes," he said. "The choristers are such as have enjoyed some education, and are acquainted with Latin; they have each his appointed stool in the church; all are clothed as I am, in white, with a black scapulary, which is laid aside upon entering the church. The second class are attired in brown; there are some yonder in the smithy."

"Is every inmate obliged to labour?" we inquired.

"Without exception," was the reply. "In former times there were but three monks in this convent, which then possessed a revenue of 30,000 francs. Now we receive but 1500, and our numbers amount to eighty. Moderate as are our requirements, we are forced, therefore, to labour diligently to earn our daily bread."

"And is unbroken silence maintained also while at work?"

"Invariably. Each morning the prior appoints to every man his task. Even the field labourers are only permitted to communicate by means of signs; and there are brethren who would suffer any amount of physical torment rather than utter a syllable without the permission of their superior. The third class is that of the *fratres oblatis*, or lay brethren, who execute the duties of servants. These retain their worldly garb."

We entered the church, and placed ourselves in the choir, opposite the high altar. Our guide quitted us to assume his stool, and a strange spectacle presented itself to our view. It appeared as if thirty corpses, clad in their shrouds, were seated along the bare white wall; their hoods were thrown back, and we were enabled to survey these pale and haggard countenances at our leisure, while from their midst arose a slow and hollow chant, which thrilled us to the heart's core. We remarked some very young as well as very aged faces among them, and wondered alike how it was possible to repair hither so early, and to remain so late.

The services of the church commence here at half-past one in the morning with matins, which last two hours. A short prayer for the dead is then uttered, and all repair to the common room, where each reads a devotional work for half an hour. At four o'clock a short service, of half an hour's duration, again takes place in the church, followed by open confession in the choir, in presence of all the monks. At five o'clock labour in the interior of the house commences, and at half-past six in the fields. The meal is followed by repose for an hour and a half, succeeded by labour. The monks again repair to the church at half-past eight (p.m.) to sing the Litany and *Salve Regina*; and upon returning to the common room, all throw themselves flat upon the ground to pray, and each monk repeats the *Miserere*. The superior then sprinkles them with holy water, and at half-past eight all retire to rest.

After the conclusion of service, the choristers walked beside us through the long passage; they resembled shadows more than living creatures.

The ceiling, the walls, and the monks, were all white, and this uniformity of colour united with the deathly silence to produce an indescribably sombre impression. One of the monks, as we passed him somewhat rapidly, raised his bowed head, fixed his large dark eyes for some seconds upon our countenance, and riveted them once more upon the ground. The features were well known to us; the last occasion upon which we had met this man was at a festival, where youth and beauty combined with all the luxury that wealth could lavish to impart splendour to the scene, and we encounter him now clad in the long white robe of a Trappist!

Our guide had invited us to partake of some refreshment in the strangers' room. We followed him; the table was covered with a coarse white cloth, upon which we found an omelette, salad, butter and cheese, bread and fruit; a bottle of white wine was placed before each guest. Compared with the meal of the monks, our repast resembled that of a Sybarite. Each of the inmates of the convent receives ten ounces of bread daily, vegetables boiled in water alone, without salt or condiments, a little milk, and a mug of water. Large bare wooden tables occupy their dining-room; a small wooden cup to hold water is placed at each seat, a large wooden spoon serves for soup, a smaller one for vegetables, a round wooden trencher for a plate, and a block of wood as a chair.

"But suppose one of the brethren were ill," we inquired of our guide, "and the physician were to order strengthening diet, or a little wine?"

"We know no illness here," he replied, "nor any other physician, save a spiritual one."

The meal passes in silence, save that from time to time the prior rings a little bell to remind the monks to reflect upon the Creator; all pause; after a short interval he rings again, and the meal is resumed.

As the monks were again repairing to the church, we stood aside to allow them to pass; but a monk grasped us gently by the arm, and signed to us to proceed. At the door of the church, a penitent lay upon the ground to be trodden upon by those who entered. The sight impressed us painfully, and we could scarcely refrain from tears as we stepped carefully over the prostrate man. But few followed our example, the majority treading upon his back.

The father-prior of Bellefontaine entered for a few moments to see us. He is an old man, tall and thin, with a severe expression of countenance, plainly betokening the habit of command. He was in all probability a soldier in former days. The only mark of distinction from his brethren is the long staff which he carries; he is attired, like the rest, in coarse white woollen robes, and, like them, wears wooden shoes. He alone is acquainted with the names and past lives of the brethren, who confide to him all their secrets and griefs, in order to live thenceforth untroubled by the world. Never, perhaps, has mortal been the recipient of more terrible confidences! As the secret father and guardian of his children, he opens all letters, but never communicates them to those to whom they are addressed. If the death of a near relation of one of the brethren is an-

nounced, he says at prayers next morning: "Brethren, let us pray for the repose of the mother of one among us, who has fallen asleep."

The master of the ceremonies clothed himself with a black scapulary, previous to conducting us through the different portions of the monastery. He warned us that at certain places—such as the dining and sleeping rooms, and the church—he should be compelled to observe silence, and that our questions would remain unanswered in such localities; still he would endeavour to make himself intelligible by means of signs.

We inspected the church and the sacristy, in both of which numerous relics are preserved. Close beside the sacristy is the churchyard—the final place of refuge for the brethren of La Trappe, from their lengthened sorrow. It does not contain a stone, a tree, or a flower, whereon the eye could rest; everywhere the same grey damp earth, thrown up, as in the fields, in regular furrows. Here and there may be seen a black cross, bearing an inscription in white letters, "Here resteth Brother Ludovicus, or Andreas." At the end of the furrow is an open grave, by the side of which the brethren meditate, whose resting-place it will prove; it was dug upon the day of the last interment, and closes upon its occupant to have a fresh one opened at its side.

The dining-room is upon the ground floor, and its windows command a full view of the churchyard. The resting-places in the sleeping-room are separated by their partitions of boards, and the monks themselves repose upon couches of the same material, somewhat similar to the wooden beds whereon the unclaimed relics of mortality are exposed to view in the Morgue at Paris. The sleeping-room is never warmed; even in the depth of the severest winter, the monks rise at half-past one, trembling with cold, from their hard resting-places, and kneel upon the icy pavement of the church to offer up their prayers at the throne of everlasting grace.

Twelve months is the period of novitiate of the monks of La Trappe. Every individual desirous of entering the order must be of age and unmarried; the slightest transgression of the rules suffices to exclude him for ever. The novice is free to withdraw whenever he thinks proper; but the vows once taken, he is dead to the world from that hour. He no longer possesses property, relatives, or even a family name. He is deprived of all the rights of humanity, all benefits of legislation. He surrenders his own will to become the silent slave of his spiritual father. Those whom he has formerly known and loved must be to him henceforth as strangers. He is a living corpse.

Upon a system like the above, but little remark is necessary. Of the benefits of retirement, and of a wise and guarded use of the tongue, no Protestant reader needs to be reminded; but in vain do we search the word of God for any authority to justify us in seceding from the world, like the spiritual brotherhood named in our article. Nor was the service of God ever meant to change us into living corpses, or to wrap us in unbroken gloom. It is the property of true faith to give the soul peace by resting on the Saviour as the great surety, against the charges of a violated

law, and it is the office of the Holy Spirit to make the soul serve its Creator with joy and gladness of heart, mingling with the world and yet remaining superior to its corrupting influences.

### "WHERE HAVE YE LAID HIM?"

OR, A GRAVE AT SCUTARI.

"WHERE have ye laid him?" We have sought his grave  
Where oft, in boyhood, he was wont to roam  
Beneath the aged elms, whose shadows fall  
O'er the green churchyard, near his rural home.

The air was thick with memories of him;  
Unchanged the scene since last he wandered there,  
Since down the winding walk each Sabbath morn  
We went together to the house of prayer.

The well-known thorns, as in the days of old,  
With fair, white blossoms, snowed the mounds below;  
The dusky rook still sailed o'er tree and tower,  
As he beheld it in the time ago.

The solemn bell, the pealing organ's strain,  
Spoke of the dear one vanished from our view;  
The ancient porch, worn steps, and, louder still,  
His vacant corner in the once filled pew.

"Where have ye laid him?" Surely it was meet  
That in his birthplace he should take his rest—  
Where mourners true his honoured grave should throng,  
Where he was known, and, therefore, loved the best!

But vain our search! They told us where the brave,  
By thousands, sleep beside a brilliant sea,  
Among the "martyrs' noble army"—far  
From home, and friends, and country—*there was he!*

There was he smitten, while we fondly marked  
Rich buds of promise in his path unfold;  
Death-stricken, when the morning's radiant sun  
Tinged e'en the clouds of his young life with gold!

Standing between the living and the dead,  
He strove for others with the tyrant grim!  
The baffled foe, indignant, turned and found,  
In fatal hour, a deadly shaft for him!

And grateful strangers to his dying bed,  
With deeds of sympathy and love, drew near;  
Soothed his last hours, and, o'er his distant grave,  
Reared the white stone and dropped the heart-felt tear.

A gallant ship, with sails in sunshine spread,  
Blue heavens above, a sparkling tide below,  
Gone down, ere yet against that noble bark  
Had burst one angry wave of human woe!

Where was the trembling mariner the while  
His vessel sank beneath Time's wreck-strown sea?  
Upon the Rock of Ages he hath sprung!  
Let worlds be riven! Ever safe is he!

Oh, sainted brother! unto thee was given  
An early entrance to thy Father's home;  
One of the "many mansions" was prepared;  
All things were ready; and the voice said, "Come."

There housed for ever, thou shalt feel no more  
The storms that rock this wintry world below!  
Thine is the "morning star," the better name,  
And the "new song" e'en angels may not know.

Oh! be it ours to walk with thee in light,  
When death and sorrow shall have passed away;  
And 'neath the broad waves of th' eternal main,  
Time's little isle hath disappeared for aye!

JOSEPHINE.

### THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

**FUTURE STATE.**—There is, I know not how, in the minds of men, a certain presage, as it were, of a future existence; and this takes the deepest root, and is most discoverable, in the greatest geniuses and most exalted souls.—*Cicero*.

**CONFESSION.**—A man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong, which is but saying in other words that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.—*Pope*.

**CREED.**—He that will believe only what he can fully understand, must have a very long head, or a very short creed.—*Colton*.

**DEBT.**—Creditors have better memories than debtors; and creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times.—*Franklin*.

**DEBT.**—Run not into debt, either for wares bought or money borrowed; be content to want things that are not of absolute necessity, rather than to run up the score.—*Sir M. Hale*.

**HEALTH.**—The only way for a rich man to be healthy, is by exercise and abstinence to live as if he was poor.—*Sir W. Temple*.

**PRAYER.**—Leave not off praying to God; for either praying will make thee leave off sinning, or continuing in sin will make thee desist from praying.—*Fuller*.

**EXCESS.**—The excesses of our youth are drafts upon our old age, payable with interest about thirty years after date.—*Colton*.

### WHAT FRUITS AM I BRINGING FORTH?

AM I BRINGING FORTH THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT,  
OR THE WORKS OF THE FLESH?

THE fruits of the Spirit are these, Gal. v. 22, 23.

Love,	Goodness,
Joy,	Faith,
Peace,	Meekness,
Long-suffering,	Temperance.
Gentleness,	

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh," Gal. v. 16.

The works of the flesh are these, Gal. v. 19—21.

Adultery,	Seditions,
Fornication,	Heresies,
Uncleaness,	Envyings,
Lasciviousness,	Murders,
Hatred,	Drunkenness,
Variance,	Revellings, and such like.

"They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

"He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," Gal. vi. 8.

"Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 22, 23.

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13.\*

\* The above can be had in a separate form for distribution.

## Varieties.

**LITERARY GENERALS.**—Some eminent commanders have not been scholars. But the three greatest generals the world has ever produced—Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon—were all men of letters: the first an annotator on Homer, the second a classical author, the third a philosopher, if he had not been an emperor. "Do you think," said Napoleon, "if I had not been General-in-Chief, and the instrument of fate to a mighty nation, that I would have accepted place and dependence? No! I would have thrown myself into the study of exact sciences; my path would have been that of Galileo and Newton; and, since I have always succeeded in my great enterprises, I should have distinguished myself also in my scientific labours. I should have left the memory of beautiful discoveries."

**EQUALIZATION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.**—One of the curious results of our modern improvements is, that if Covent-garden has a plethora of good things on any one morning, she sends off a telegraphic message to Birmingham or other large towns, to ascertain the state of the supplies there; if there be room for more, waggon-loads of fruit are sent off by rail, and thus prices become equalized and supplies diffused. On one night several tons of gherkins arrived at the King's-cross terminus. The South-eastern Railway brought up to the Bricklayers' Arms depot, in the first half of the year 1855, no less than 48,000 baskets and other packages of fruit and vegetables, weighing 1150 tons. But this is far below the amount in the second half of the year, when more vegetable products are in their prime. On three days in the months of July and August, the arrivals amounted to more than 10,000 packages each day. On one very busy night the goods trains brought up 120 tons of peas and 40 tons of filberts, grown in Kent, together with 40 tons of ripe plums from abroad, superadded to a fair average of other vegetables and fruits. The Kent-road was in a turmoil all night, nothing but laden waggons following in an almost continuous stream. It is obvious that when Covent-garden market receives such special inundations of good things, it would be advantageous to avoid an excessive laxity of price by sending portions into the country for sale; and the electric telegraph offers a peculiar aid here, by diffusing a knowledge of the state of the markets in any part of England.—*Dodd's Food of London.*

**THE FOURTH AND THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENTS.**—The late worthy Dr. Lockhart, of the College Church, Glasgow, when travelling in England, was sojourning in an inn when the Sabbath came round. On entering the public room, and about to set out to church, he found two gentlemen preparing for a game at chess. He addressed them in words to this effect: "Gentlemen, have you locked up your portmanteaus carefully?" "No. What! are there thieves in this house?" "I do not say that; only I was thinking that if the waiter comes in and finds you making free with the fourth commandment, he may think of making free with the eighth commandment." Upon which the gentlemen said, "There was something in that," and so laid aside their game.

**INFLUENCE OF THE GULF STREAM ON CLIMATE.**—Hugh Miller says: Britain and Ireland owe their genial, equable warmth, that ripens year after year their luxuriant crops, and renders their winters so mild that the sea never freezes around their shores, not, at least directly, to the distant sun. Like apartments heated by pipes of steam or hot water, or greenhouses heated by flues, they derive their warmth from a heating agent literally applied. They are heated by warm water. The great gulf stream, which, issuing from the Straits of Florida, strikes diagonally across the Atlantic, and, impinging on our coasts, casts upon them not unfrequently the productions of the West Indies, and also a considerable portion of the warmth of the West Indies, is generally recognised as the heating agent which gives to our country a climate so much more mild and genial than that of any other country similarly situated. Wherever its influence is felt—and it extends as far north as the southern shores of Iceland, Nova Zembla, and the North Cape—the sea in winter tells of its meliorating effects by never freezing; it remains open, like those portions of a reservoir or canal into which the heated air of a steam-boiler is supposed to escape. In some seasons—an effect of unknown causes—the gulf stream impinges

more strongly against our coasts than at other times; and it did so in 1775, when Benjamin Franklin made his recorded observations upon it, the first of any value which we possess; and again during the three mild winters that immediately preceded the last severe one, and which owed their mildness apparently to that very circumstance. It was found during the latter seasons that the temperature of the sea around our western coasts rose from one and a half to two degrees above its ordinary average; and our readers must remember how, during these seasons, that every partial freezing that set in at once yielded to a thaw whenever a puff of wind from the west carried into the atmosphere the caloric of the water over which it swept. The amount of heat discharged into the Atlantic by this great ocean current is enormous. "A simple calculation," says Lieut. Maury, "will show that the great quantity of heat discharged over the Atlantic from the waters of the gulf stream in a winter day would be sufficient to raise the whole column of atmosphere that rests upon France and the British islands from the freezing point to summer heat. It is the influence of the stream upon the climate," he adds, "that makes Erin the Emerald Isle of the sea, and clothes the shores of Albion with evergreen robes; while in the same latitude, on the other side, the shores of Labrador are fast bound in fetters of ice."

**THE PIG AND THE MOCKING-BIRD.**—Mr. Gosse, in his "History of the Birds of Jamaica," gives an account of the mocking-bird. The hogs are, it seems, the creatures that give him the most annoyance. They are ordinarily fed upon the inferior oranges, the fruit being shaken down to them in the evening; hence they acquire the habit of resorting to the orange tree to await for a lucky windfall. The mocking-bird, feeling nettled at the intrusion, flies down and begins pecking away at the hog with all its might. Piggy, not understanding the matter, but pleased with the titillation, gently lies down and turns up his broad side to enjoy it. The poor bird gets in an agony of distress, pecks and pecks again, but increases the enjoyment of the luxurious intruder, and at last gives it up in despair.

**A PRIVATE HOUSE IN NEW YORK.**—We entered a spacious marble hall, leading to a circular stone staircase of great width, the balustrades being figures elaborately cast in bronze. Above this staircase was a lofty dome, decorated with paintings in fresco of eastern scenes. There were niches in the walls, some containing Italian statuary, and others small jets of water pouring over artificial moss. There were six or eight magnificent reception-rooms, furnished in various styles, the Mediæval, the Elizabethan, the Italian, the Persian, the modern English, etc. There were fountains of fairy workmanship, pictures from the old masters, statues from Italy, *chefs-d'œuvre* of art; porcelain from China and Seves; damasks, cloth of gold, and *bijoux* from the East; Gobelin tapestry, tables of malachite and agate, and "knick-knacks" of every description. In the Mediæval and Elizabethan apartments, it did not appear to me that any anachronisms had been committed with respect to the furniture and decorations. The light was subdued by passing through windows of rich stained glass. I saw one table, the value of which might be about 2000 guineas. The ground was black marble, with a wreath of flowers inlaid with very costly gems upon it. There were flowers or bunches of fruit, of turquoise, carbuncles, rubies, topazes, and emeralds, while the leaves were of malachite, cornelian, or agate. The effect produced by this lavish employment of wealth was not very good. The bedrooms were scarcely less magnificently furnished than the reception-rooms; with chairs formed of stag-horns, tables inlaid with agates, and hangings of Damascus cashmere, richly embossed with gold. There was nothing gaudy, profuse, or prominent in the decorations or furniture; everything had evidently been selected and arranged by a person of very refined taste. It is not the custom for Americans to leave large fortunes to their children; their wealth is spent in great measure in surrounding themselves with the beautiful and the elegant in their splendid mansions; and it is probable that the adornments which have been collected with so much expense and trouble will be dispersed at the death of their present possessors.—*Englishwoman in America.*